

prominent teeth and curved antlers, and its colour was a smoky-gray of a uniform shade. This was the famous crested muntjac: the black barking deer had turned out to be smoky-gray. The American Museum of Natural History would be the first to possess a specimen

The smoky-gray deer was in good condition, we were happy to discover, and the newspaper correspondents would now be at liberty to call the expedition a success. Actually, its success or failure did not depend on one specimen, however important, but not one of us would have feigned indifference to the vagaries of those who had made this a barking-deer expedition. Anyway, there it was on the ground before us, the prize for which we had worked and struggled.'

An excellent photograph of the dead animal and its Lisu hunter is printed in the book. Mr. Anthony's notes now make it clear that this was merely another example of the Tufted Deer.

In 1948 I found it to be common in the Chimili area, where it was wont to come out singly early in the mornings to graze on open grassy areas below the snow-line at 8,000-9,000 ft. The Lisus in this area had no superstition about hunting them with cross-bows and arrows, and I purchased one so killed; the skin and skull were presented to the British Museum (Natural History), whose only other specimen from Burma was the one presented by Capt. Maxwell West. I failed to find this deer in the upper N'Mai Hka or its tributaries the Ahkyang and the Taron, nor has anyone else yet recorded it north of the Chimili on the Burma side.

FOREST OFFICE,

BRUNEI,

SARAWAK,

November 3, 1955.

B. E. SMYTHIES

7. EXPERIMENTS IN IMPLANTING AFRICAN LIONS INTO MADHYA BHARAT

The lion in India used to be fairly common in the jungles now included in Rajasthan and Madhya Bharat. It is unfortunate that it is not found any longer in the country except in the Gir forest situated in Saurashtra. The reason for its disappearance is the tiger which kept on increasing in number and killed off or drove away the lion until it found an asylum in the Gir forest. This forest is an isolated area completely cut off by over a hundred miles from the tiger infested hills. The tiger is the kind of animal which does not allow other large carnivora feeding upon the same food to live in the same locality. It is like the case of having two swords in one scabbard.

The tiger seems to have come to India from China, Assam, Burma etc., through Bengal, and that is the reason why it is still called Bengal tiger. It was more cunning and powerful than the lion and therefore it killed off or drove the lion away from the areas it occupied.

I had a few opportunities to arrange duels between the lion and the tiger in a small arena specially prepared for the purpose. In three such experiments on three different occasions I found the same result. It is the lion that always makes the first attack and it is he who gets the worst of it. One or two smacks from the tiger are enough to make the lion retire.

The late Maharaja Sir Madho Rao Scindhia, realizing that lions had existed in his State (Gwalior) in the olden days, resolved to re-introduce them. With this object he imported three pairs of lions from Africa. The jungle selected was Sheopur and Shivpuri forest range, which covered an area of some 1,000 square miles.

When these animals arrived they were taken to a place called Dobe Kund which is practically half way between Sheopur and Shivpuri. A special enclosure of stone wall, 20 ft. high, was prepared, in which the lions were kept. They were not fed on dead meat but were always provided with live buffaloes so that they might not lose the natural habit of killing animals. They were kept in this enclosure for about 4 years during which they not only got thoroughly acclimatized, but also bred and increased in number.

This place was situated in a lonely spot in the midst of forest abounding in tigers. The roaring of the lions always attracted the wild tigers, but on account of the high wall they could not get at them. We used to make periodical inspections of the place, and twice I came across tigers lying about in the vicinity of the enclosure--they probably came to challenge the lions!

We did not let out all the lions at the same time, but they were released in pairs. The first pair which was let out in August 1920 gave us no trouble, but vanished in the wilderness. But when the second pair was let out, the animals came back again and made their home outside the enclosure. They caused great alarm among the men who went there with a supply of their food. They attacked and snatched away the buffalo from their hands. Fortunately they did not kill any man but they simply took the buffalo and started feeding on it there and then.

On getting this news we got rather worried; so the next day we went there in a party and drove them away from the enclosure. Since there were some more lions left in the enclosure a regular supply had to be sent for their feed. The next day when the shikaris went with a fresh buffalo they found the male lion lying dead with his body badly mutilated, showing that he had been killed by a tiger. The lioness was not seen anywhere in the vicinity. What had apparently happened was that this pair on being driven away must have come across some tiger in the jungle who must have killed the lion, and the lioness must have escaped.

The third, fourth and fifth pairs gave us no trouble, but when the sixth and the last pair was let out after two months they proved most troublesome. They adopted the easiest method for getting their food. The forest in this part is very thinly populated having no big villages but just a few scattered hamlets. The poor villagers do not possess any fire-arms. The pair of lions made the habit of going to these hamlets and helping themselves to any cattle they could kill and eat on the spot. The villagers, to protect their animals, built stronger fences.

The next time the pair visited the village, they could not get through those fences and therefore they killed a man instead and devoured him. As soon as this news was brought to us we rushed to the spot and destroyed the animals.

Most of the five pairs that vanished into the wilderness went a long way east and south. A few cases came to my knowledge of these lions having been actually shot near Panna and Jhansi in the east, and some at Kotah in the south. The late Maharaja of Baria shot one of them a few years ago along the bank of Kunoo River in Madhya Bharat.

I was glad to read in the newspapers that there is a proposal to re-introduce the Indian lion from the Gir forest into some other parts of our country, so that the species may not get extinct. If this idea is under serious contemplation, I suggest that the authorities should select isolated forests in which there are no tigers. Rajasthan is one of the suitable provinces where one can find such isolated jungles. It is most desirable to make this experiment, because very few Indian lions are left in the world, and if they die the species will vanish with them.

Where sport is concerned it is far more interesting and exciting to shoot a tiger than a lion. The tiger requires comparatively elaborate arrangements to be made for a successful shoot, and sometimes even after all such arrangements and precautions there is every possibility of his giving one the slip. He is infinitely more cautious than the lion.

In the summer of 1952 I accompanied the Maharaja of Jaipur who went for a lion shoot in the Gir forest in Junagadh. All shooting arrangements were organised by H. H. The Jam Sahib of Nawanagar. The very next day after our arrival a beat was organised in which two lions came out together out of which one was shot. Another beat was organised the next day in which another lion was shot.

I was surprised to notice that in neither case did the lion attempt to make any use of cover. He came out boldly as if taking a stroll, offering an easy target to the sportsman. Once he is wounded he is certainly as bold as the tiger.

There is a great difference between the habits of these two animals as well. A lion uses his paws to strike his adversary, whereas the tiger uses them mainly for holding down his victim. Lions live in a 'pride' consisting of a large family, whereas the habit of the tiger in this respect is just the opposite. Lions do their hunting by team work which tigers rarely do. The lion is comparatively weaker but bolder, and he is not half as cunning as the tiger. If a tiger is accompanied by a tigress and cubs it is the tiger who tackles the kill first, and he has his fill before allowing any member of this family to touch the food. But in the case of the lion, and also the panther, it is the female who does the killing and eating, while the male joins her later on. To put it in nut-shell a tiger has more of the Indian habit in this respect than the other animals!

Lions should certainly be increased not only to save them from extinction but also for providing a variety of big game shooting in India, although it is much more fun, and also more difficult, to shoot a tiger.

In conclusion I must state that our implanting experiments were more of a success than a failure. The very fact that H. H. The Maharao of Kotah, and the Maharajas of Panna and Baria have shot these lions in comparatively recent years, suggests the possibility that they may still be surviving in remote areas away from the haunts of the tiger.

NARAIN NIWAS,
JAIPUR (RAJASTHAN),
October 26, 1955.

KESRI SINGH,
Colonel.

8. WESTERN LIMITS OF TWO EAST HIMALAYAN BIRDS

While in Landour recently I had the opportunity of examining a specimen (♂) of Gould's Shortwing, *Brachypteryx stellatus* Gould, collected by Master Robert Fleming at Dhodi Tal, 11,000 ft. altitude, 70 miles due north of Mussoorie, on 7-6-1953. The hitherto known distribution of this species was Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and South Tibet bordering Bhutan.

I also examined a specimen of the Striped-throated Yuhina, *Yuhina gularis gularis* Hodgson, collected by him at Jabarkhet, Mussoorie (ca. 6,000 ft.) on 9-3-1953. The Fauna gives the distribution of this as 'Nepal to eastern Assam north of the Brahmaputra'.

These specimens, therefore, represent a considerable westward extension of the known ranges. Remarkably enough both of them were killed by Master Robert with an air-rifle!

33, PALI HILL,
BANDRA, BOMBAY,
January 13, 1956.

SÁLIM ALI

9. A DABCHICK IS BORN

In the game of bird photography both sides often follow the same tactics: the ardent photographer, having found a nest, retires into his 'hide' and waits for the return of its owner; the wily bird, noting the carefully camouflaged excrescence which has suddenly grown from the ground, retires into the jungle and waits for the departure of the photographer. And so, things being as they are, the consequences are as inevitable as the philosophers say they will be, namely unexposed films, unproductive hours, and unavailing labour.

The Little Grebe or Dabchick (*Podiceps ruficollis*) is expert at playing this game of patience, for it will vanish into the reeds, in the midst of which it makes its home, without leaving behind so much as a ripple on the water, and yet it will not go so far away as to deprive the photographer, steaming in his hide, of the trilling sound of its mocking laughter. At such moments, the photographer is apt to forget his biological training and call it 'a regular swine'.

In the summer of 1944 I was in Kashmir and planned to photograph, among other birds, the Little Grebe; I hoped for success of course, but expected none, and my expectation was largely fulfilled!